Luthers Predeceſſours:

OR AN

ANSVVERE

TO

THE QVESTION

OF THE PAPISTS:

Where was your Church before Luther?

LONDON,

Imprinted by *Felix Kingſton* for *George Winder*, and are to be ſold at his ſhop in Saint *Dunſtons* Church-yard in Fleet-ſtreet. 1624.

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OR AN

ANSWER

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AMongſt all thoſe Creatures that yeeld an vnpleaſant ſound, none are ſo clamorous and obſtreperous, as Frogs, and Locuſts; theſe by land, the other by water, ſaluting each paſſenger with an vnwelcome note: the iuſt picture and reſemblance of popiſh Prieſts, and Ieſuites, which certainly are the Frogs which S. *Iohn* ſaw to come forth of the mouth of the Beaſt, and the falſe prophet; whoſe croaking and vnwelcome noiſe doth not a little trouble each Chriſtian paſſenger: Amongſt other harſh notes of theirs, this queſtion hath his place: for what muſicke can there be in it? *Where was your Church before Luther?* To what end is this queſtion mooued, except it bee to trouble men? for, what if wee could not proue, that our Engliſh Church was before *Luther?* muſt it needs

 follow,

follow, that the doctrine we hold is vntrue? or ſhall the doctrine of the Church of *Rome* be euer the truer, becauſe of onely antiquity? what if *Arrius* or *Neſtorius* could haue deduced the Patrons of their opinions from *Adam*, ſhould they for that haue beene orthodoxall? No certainly: and why not? Becauſe the Church muſt be prooued and allowed by the doctrine, and not the doctrine authorized by the Church, which the Papiſts (a people wiſe in their generation) well knowing, haue ouerturned the courſe of nature, & will haue the Scripture and all doctrine to hang vpon the determination of the Church: and vpon this ground it is, that they proceede to ſuch queſtions as theſe, hoping that if they haue once amazed any one with the name of the Church, and ſhall haue driuen him from title and intereſt to the Church before *Luthers* time, they ſhall eaſily make him call in queſtion the whole frame of doctrine of the reformed Churches.

Vnto this queſtion anſwers haue beene made, arguments alledged to proue that the doctrine of the Proteſtant Religion hath had his being in the world long before the dayes of *Luther*: That argument of the worthy Doctor *Fealy*, cannot by any Ieſuite be anſwered, who concludeth, that the doctrine of the reformed Churches muſt needs haue Profeſſours in all ages, becauſe it is eternall: for eternity muſt needes haue a perpetuall duration without interruption.

The argument of Induction, is that which better pleaſeth the Ieſuite, but by no meanes will hee ſuffer our enumeration to begin with Chriſt and his Apoſtles; for then what ſhifts, what cauils and tergiuiſations they haue, may eaſily appeare by the proceedings of the late conference betwixt D. *White*, and D. *Fealy*, againſt

Fiſher, and *Sweet*: Wherefore, to anſwer a foole, according to his folly, I haue indeuoured to draw the argument of Induction *à poſteriore*, beginning with the ages next before *Luther*; the which is not ſo hard a taske as commonly is imagined: But firſt, we muſt agree vpon the termes of this queſtion, *Where was your Church, &c?* where wee muſt firſt know what is meant by *your*, and what by *Church*.

For, if by *your*, they meane the Church of our Nation, that is, Where was your Engliſh reformed Church? Then are we to anſwer out of our own Chronicles, and ſo ſhall we be able to name the fewer in all ages, and in ſome ages perhaps none; not that there were none, but that the Euidences are loſt: But I ſuppoſe they doe not by the termes, *your Church*, vnderſtand a Nationall or Prouinciall Church, becauſe then muſt they prooue, that the Church of the New Teſtament is tyed to a place: ſo that where it once hath beene planted, there it ſhould continue, which is contrary to all experience: beſides, had they meant ſo, they would haue rather named *Tyndall*, or ſome other Engliſhman, then *Luther* a German. By *your Church*, they meane then thoſe men in what Country ſoeuer, which confeſſed and maintained the ſame doctrine.

Then, for the meaning of the word *Church*, wee demand whether they mean a viſible conſtituted Church, which might haue beene knowne by the diſtinction and ſucceſſion of Biſhops, Elders, Deacons, &c. or whether they meane generally any company of men, holding and profeſſing thoſe truths and doctrines which we maintaine?

For, if they will tye vs to the former, I ſay ſtill, the taske is vnequall, becauſe the Records are wanting, but eſpecially,

especially, because they cannot prooue that the Church must alwayes bee in such manner visible: for in *Elias* time there were 7000. vnknowne to him, much more to *Abab*. In the time of Christs passion some of the Papists say, that the Church rested onely in *Marie*; and all doe vsually compare the Church to the Moone, which is alwayes lasting, but not alwaies in the Full.

But, if they meant the latter, namely, a company of men professing the same faith which wee doe; then wee further propound to them two questions.

The first is, Whether the persecuting of any *de facto*, doe hinder the iustifying of them *de iure*, which they must needs denie, except they will beg the question: and then, though we finde such, and such, in former ages to haue beene condemned, yet if *de iure*, they ought not, and that we can iustifie their Tenents, we shall proceed more easily in challenging them for ours: But if they would haue vs to name men vncondemned, liuing in peace, free from persecution, they must then prooue, that persecution doth take away the priuiledge of the Church; that those men shall not be of the Church, because persecuted: which if they goe about, they must wipe out the whole infancy of the Church for the first 300. yeeres; but they shall neuer be able to prooue it: for the woman in *Reuel.* 12. was constrained to flie into the wildernesse for feare of the Dragon.

The second is, What those doctrines are, which we must prooue, those whom wee seeke for to haue held: for, if they meane the fundamentall poynts of Religion, contained in the *Creed* for matters of faith, in the *Decalogue* for matter of practice, and in the *Lords Praier* for matter of praier, they themselues shall be our spokesmen, for they and wee hold these in common; but if they

they meane thoſe points of doctrine wherein we diſſent from the preſent Church of Rome (which they muſt do if they vnderſtand themſelues in the queſtion) then we further deſire to know whether they will not allow vs to challenge thoſe for ours, who held the moſt, and maineſt, for which they ſuffered as well as wee; although (perhaps) in ſome other points they diſſented from vs in our generall Tenents: for, if they will allow vs onely ſuch, who both in doctrine and diſcipline did in all points agree, they are too narrow for any diſpute; beſides, they muſt prooue that there hath beene alwaies ſuch an vnity of words and doctrine, that in no point the profeſſours haue or may diſſent, and yet remaine members of the Church: a taske that will neuer fadge well, eſpecially with them in their mutinous multitude and rabble of religious orders; yea, let them then call to minde how weakely *Harding* hath defended his anſwere of Biſhop *Iewels* challenge; or, let them anſwere *Perkins* Problem, and prooue where their Church was before the *Trent* Councell; for it will aſmuch trouble them to name a company of men in all points profeſſing the *Trent* faith, as vs, to finde a company of men profeſſing in all points the doctrine of the reformed religion: But if they giue vs liberty to make challenge to them, who in the moſt and greateſt points haue agreed with vs (which is but reaſonable) then in the next place we deſire to grow to a point, and agree vpon the maine points of difference betwixt vs and them: All which in generall do concerne either the offices of Chriſt, or the fruites of his office, the which by their doctrine are ouerthrowne.

For firſt, the kingly office of Chriſt is ouerthrowne by the ſupremacy of the Pope, which draweth with it

the pride of the Clergy, and exaltation of them aboue the temporall power.

Secondly, the Propheticall office is ouerthrowne by their ſilencing the Scripture, and by giuing ſuch liberty to the Church, yea, and to the Pope, to frame articles of faith.

Thirdly, the Prieſtly office is ouerthrowne in the worke of ſatisfaction, by Merits, Indulgences, Purgatory, &c. In the worke of Application, by their abuſes thruſt into the Sacraments, eſpecially Tranſubſtantiation, reall Preſence, Exorciſmes, &c. & by their falſe ſacraments, which were neuer appointed by Chriſt, as meanes of application. In the worke of Interceſſion, by Angels, Saints, Images, whom they haue made their mediators of interceſſion.

Laſtly, the fruites of Chriſts office, redounding to vs by the mediation of Chriſt, is our Iuſtification before God, which doctrine they haue laboured to ouerthrow.

Now to the point, this our taske wee are to ſhew forth the names of ſuch men, who haue conſented with vs in the oppoſition of the Supremacy, exemption of the Clergy from Ciuill iuriſdiction, in the authority of the Scriptures, and in the communicating of them to the people, in condemning Merits, Indulgences, Purgatory, Tranſubſtantiation, reall preſence, intercеſſion of Saints, and Angels, Image-worſhip, Pilgrimage; in the doctrine of our free iuſtification by faith, and ſuch other points, which are controuerted betwixt vs, and the Church of Rome. And this wee will doe firſt in the inſtance of our owne Countrimen, and then proceed to others.

Know all men therefore by theſe preſents, that a-

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bout the yeere of Grace 1370. in the time of *Edward* the third, King of England, at what time all the world was in moſt deſperate and vile eſtate, and that lamentable ignorance and darkeneſſe of Gods truth, had ouer-ſhaddowed the Church moſt; *Iohn Wickliffe*, who almoſt 200. yeeres before *Luther*, by the eſpeciall prouidence of God, was raiſed vp here in England, to detect more fully and amply, the poiſon of the Popes doctrine, and to purge Religion from thoſe dregs and filthineſſe, with which it was defiled; a Profeſſor of Diuinitie was he in Oxford, a man of note in his time, and of famous memory in the ages following: For after hee had begunne to publiſh ſome concluſions touching the Doctrine of the Sacrament, and other abuſes of the Church, (which boyle and ſore could not be touched, without the great paine and griefe of the world) hee was much infeſted with the Monkes and Friers, who like Hornets, did aſſaile the good man on euery ſide: After them, the Prieſts tooke the matter in hand, and *Symon Sudbery*, Archbiſhop, depriued him of his Benefice in Oxford; yet by the friendly and fauourable aſſiſtance of *Iohn* of *Gaunt*, Duke of Lancaſter, and *Henry Percy*, Earle Marſhal, (being alſo befriended of the King, who had heretofore made vſe of him in an Ambaſſage) he bore out the malice of the Friers, and of the Archbiſhop, all the dayes of *Edward* the third, and of Pope *Vrban*; who being buſied in ſuppreſſing his aduerſary, *Clement* the ſeuenth, could not ſpare any time to deale with *Wickliffe*: and ſo it came to paſſe, by Gods prouidence, that the truth began to take ſome place and roote in mens hearts.

Afterward in the beginning of *Richard* the 2. and of *Gregory* the eleuenth, his aduerſaries eſpied their time,

and incenſed the Pope againſt him, who ſendeth foorth his Bull to the Vniuerſity of Oxford, and an Epiſtle to the King, with diuers Letters to the Biſhops, dated all 11. kal. of Iune, in the ſeuenth yeere of his Pontificality 1378. By which it appeareth, that *Wicklife* was a man of note, and that theſe things were not done in a corner, but that his preaching had taken effect: So that the Biſhops had neede of the Popes owne helpe to ſuppreſſe him and his abettors, the which although they attempted, yet could they not bring to paſſe: his commendation teſtified by the Vniuerſitie is this: That hee behaued himſelfe as a ſtout Champion of the Faith, neither was hee conuict of any hereſie: and God forbid (ſaith the Teſtimoniall) that our Prelates ſhould haue condemned a man of ſuch honeſty, of hereſie.

His bookes were many, and ſpred abroade, not only throughout England, but alſo by occaſion of Queene Anne, wife to *Richard* the ſecond, ſiſter to *Wenceſlaus* King of Bohemia, carried into Bohemia, whence *Iohn Huſſe* learned the beginnings of his knowledge. Thus was this man a moſt worthy inſtrument in the Church of God, like a bright Starre ſhining farre and neere.

Now for his concluſions which are recorded for his; they are many, & gathered by his aduerſaries, and therefore if in all points they ſound not ſo well as we could deſire, yet certainely wee may beleeue that they were not ſo bad as ſome of them are deliuered.

Wee finde that in a Conuention at London 1382. May 17. they proceeded to the condemnation of his articles, ſome as heroticall, ſome as erroneous: The which alſo were afterward preſented to the Councell of Conſtance, with diuers others to the number of 45. in all, and by the ſame Councell condemned, the which for

breuitie ſake I haue collected vnto their ſeuerall heads.

1. Touching the ſupremacy, hee held that it is not neceſſary to ſaluation, to beleeue that the Church of Rome is ſupreme head of all Churches: That the Church of Rome is the Synagogue of Satan; Neither is the Pope immediately the Vicar of Chriſt, nor his Apoſtles, and that the Excommunication of the Pope and his Prelates is not to bee feared, becauſe it is the cenſure of Antichriſt.

2. Concerning religious orders (which are the tayle of Antichriſt) he taught, That thoſe holy men, as *Francis, Dominick, Benedict, &c.* which haue inſtituted priuate religions whatſoeuer they be, in ſo doing, haue grieuouſly offended; And ſuch who do found Monaſteries, doe offend and ſin; ſo all ſuch who enter into ſuch religions, are thereby vnable to keepe the commandements of God, as alſo to attaine to the Kingdome of heauen, except they returne from the ſame: yea, that religious men being in their priuate religion, are not of the Chriſtian Religion, but are members of the Diuell.

3. Concerning the Authoritie of the Church, his doctrine was, that whatſoeuer the Pope and his Cardinals can deduce cleerely out of the Scriptures, that only is to bee beleeued, or to bee done at their admonition; and that whatſoeuer elſe they command, is to bee condemned as hereticall; As for the decretals of the Pope, they are Apocrypha, and ſeduce men from the faith of Chriſt; and the Clergy that ſtudie them, are fooles.

4. As touching preaching and hearing the Word, which is the execution of Chriſts Propheticall Office,

hee taught; That it is lawfull for any man either Prieſt or Deacon, to preach the Word of God, without the authoritie of the Apoſtolike Sea, or any other of his Catholikes; and that all ſuch, who doe leaue preaching or hearing the Word, for feare of their excommunication, they are already excommunicated, and in the Day of iudgement, ſhalbe counted traitors againſt God.

5. Hee oppoſed alſo the ſelling of Prayers, Pardons, Indulgences, and ſuch Popiſh traſh, by which the ſatisfaction of Chriſt is weakened; affirming, that it was but a folly to beleeue the Popes Pardons. Item, that all ſuch, as bee hired for temporall liuing to pray for other, doe offend and ſinne in Simony.

6. In the doctrine of the Sacraments, which are the inſtruments of Chriſt, to apply to vs the work of his ſatisfaction, he laboureth much to reforme the abuſes.

1. In Baptiſme, hee found fault with their doctrine of neceſſity; teaching, that they which doe affirme, that the infants of the faithfull departing without the Sacrament of Baptiſme, are not ſaued, are preſumptuous and fooles in ſo affirming.

2. In the Supper of the Lord, hee oppoſed the reall preſence, and tranſubſtantiation, teaching, that Chriſt is not really in the Sacrament of the Altar, in his proper and corporall perſon, but only figuratiuely; That without all doubt it is a figuratiue ſpeech to ſay, This is my body. Item, that the ſubſtance of materiall bread and wine, euen bread in his owne ſubſtance, doth remaine in the Sacrament of the Altar, and ceaſeth not to be bread ſtill. That the Accidents do not remain without the Subiect in the ſame Sacrament, after the conſecration. So alſo hee taught; That it is not found,

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or eſtabliſhed by the Goſpell, that Chriſt did ordaine Maſſe.

3. As for the other fiue, which we count baſtard-ſacraments, ſome he did doubt of, as, Extreame Vnction: for this is one article, if corporall vnction, or anneyling, were a Sacrament as it is faigned to be, Chriſt and his Apoſtles would not haue left the ordinance thereof vntouched. So alſo for Shrift; if a man be duely and truely contrite and penitent, all outward confeſſion is ſuperfluous and vnprofitable.

Other Sacraments he complained of, as being abuſed; hallowing of Churches, (ſaith hee) confirmation of children, and the Sacrament of Orders, be reſerued to the Pope and Biſhops onely, for the reſpect of temporall lucre. So alſo concerning Matrimony, he held, that the cauſes of diuorcement, of conſanguinity, or affinity, be not founded in the Scripture, but are onely the ordinances of men, and humane inuentions.

7. Laſtly, concerning the power of the Keyes, and the Churches cenſures, his poſitions are; That no Prelate ought to excommunicate any man, except he know him firſt to be excommunicate of God: and that he that doth excommunicate any other man, is thereby himſelfe either an hereticke, or excommunicate. *Item*, that a Prelate excommunicating any man of the Clergy, which hath appealed to the King, or to the Councell, is thereby himſelfe a traitour to the King and Realme.

This in effect is the ſumme of his doctrine, wherein howſoeuer there may be, ſome few ſmall ſlips, or harſh phraſes, yet no pernicious errours, much leſſe, damnable hereſie; but for the ſubſtance, it is ſound and good, and agreeable to the Canon of the Word. Wherefore, howſoeuer the Synod of *London*, and the Councell of

Conſtance

Conſtance, haue agreed to condemne theſe Articles and his Books, yea, & his bones alſo to the fire (41. yeeres after his death) yet ſince *de iure* they ought not ſo to haue done, and that we are able to iuſtifie his doctrine, we are bold to challēge him as a fit inſtance to anſwer the queſtion propoſed; and doe conclude, that our Church had a being, and the doctrine of the reformed Churches had profeſſors, long before the dayes of *Luther*.

But goe to, let vs goe on, and ſee what other can be named; one Swallow maketh no Summer, nor one profeſſor a Church. True: and therefore except we can draw downe the profeſſion of this doctrine ſucceſſiuely from *Wickcliffe*, to the dayes of *Luther*, let vs loſe all this labour: wherefore we are to know, that both together with *Wickcliffe*, and after him, aroſe a multitude in the Church of *England*, maintaining the ſame doctrine, and ſpreading it abroad among the people, labouring with might and maine to defend it. Such were *Lau. Redman*, Maſter of Arts, *Dau. Sawtree*, Diuine, *Iohn Aſchwarby*, Vicar of S. *Maries* Church in *Oxford*, *William Iones*, an excellent young man, well learned, *Th. Brightwell*, *Will. Haulam* a Ciuilian, *Ralph Grenhurſt*, *Io. Scut*, *Ph. Nortice*, who being excommunicate by Pope *Eugenius* the fourth, appealed to a generall Councell; *Peter Paine*, Lord *Cobham*, with diuers others, whoſe names are mentioned in the Kings writ, ſent to the Sheriffe of *Northampton*, giuen at the Mannor of *Langly*, *March* 8. in the 12. of *Richard* the ſecond: ſo alſo, for confirmation of their multitudes, the words of the Statute made *Anno* 5. of *Richard* 2.

About this time *W. Courtny* Archbiſhop, being in his Viſitation at *Leiceſter*, conuented diuers before him, as *Dexter*, *Tailor*, *Wagſtaffe*, *Scriuener*, *Smith*, *Henry*, *Parchmeanar*,

meanar, Goldſmith; theſe, with other moe, were accuſed to the Archbiſhop, for holding the opinion of the ſacrament of the Altar, auricular confeſſion, and other ſacraments, contrary to that which the Church of Rome did teach: The which perſons, becauſe being cited they came not in, were ſolemnely accurſed as hereticks with bell, booke, and candle; yea, and by the ſame Archbiſhop was the whole Towne of *Leiceſter* interdicted, ſo long as any of theſe excommunicate perſons ſhould remaine in it. There was alſo one *Matilda* an Anchoreſſe accuſed of the ſame opinions: all this happened in 1387. in the 10. yeere of *Richard* 2. About the ſame time *Peter Pateſhall* an *Auſten* Frier, hauing obtained leaue of the Pope to change his coate and religion, hearing the doctrine of *Wickliffe*, and others of the ſame ſort, began to preach openly, and to deteſt the vices of his Couent, preaching in *London*, & by the Londoners graciouſly entertained and vpheld againſt the turbulent Friers, who ſought to moleſt him. Thus by the preaching of *Wickliffe*, and others, the Goſpell began to fructifie and ſpread abroad in *London*, and other places of the Realme, and more would haue done, had not the Prelates ſet themſelues ſo forcibly with might and maine to gaine-ſtand the courſe thereof.

1389. *William Swinderby* a worthy defender of the faith, with *Wickliffe*, was accuſed to the Biſhop of *Lincolne*, of certaine Articles, both vntruely collected and cruelly exhibited againſt him by the Friers, & by their vehemency was vrged to reuoke: afterward he remouing into the Dioceſſe of *Hereford*, was there alſo moleſted and troubled vnder *Iohn Treſnant* Biſhop of *Hereford*, vpon the ſame Articles; the which Articles as they were giuen in by the Friers, and how anſwered by

Swinderby in his protestation, hangeth vpon record, and out of the Registers in the same old English in which it was written, is by M. *Fox* transcribed into his History of the Church: By the reading of which protestation, wee may note a notable piece of knauery in his accusers, *viz.* not to deliuer his assertions faithfully, as he did deliuer them, but as they supposed to make him most odious in the defence of them; and by that we may well guesse, that these points in *Wickliffe*, which seeme rough and harsh, met with such vnhandsome workmen. The processe against this *Swinderby*, his declaration vpon certaine conclusions touching the Sacrament of the Altar, Confession, Indulgences, and touching Antichrist, his appeale to the King, his letter to the Parliament, doe sufficiently confirme his worth and sufficiency in the cause.

1391. *Walter Brute* a man of sufficient learning, though no Priest, was conuented before the Bishop of *Worcester*, and accused of the same Articles with *Swinderbie*. Admirable it is to reade his storie, especially in it, his learned declarations concerning Antichrist, the Popes vsurped power, the power of the Keyes, free iustification by faith onely, auricular confession, absolution, the matter of the Sacrament, Transubstantiation, Idolatry, Exorcising, priestly blessing, buying and selling of prayers, and other Romish dregs, the lawfull vse of an oath; in which hee also prooueth that the City of Rome is *Babylon*. What could hee haue done more in our cause, had he liued since *Luther*? Out of his declarations may be taken a sufficient Commentary and Exposition of those Articles, which as they are ascribed vnto *Wickliffe*, seeme some-thing harsh. Furthermore, the Bull of Pope *Boniface* the 9. dated the 15. Kal. *Oct.* in

the 6. yeere of his Popedome, directed to King *Richard* the 2. and to the Biſhop of *Hereford*, doth confeſſe, that theſe Chriſtians whom the common people called Lollards, did daily grow and increaſe, and preuaile againſt their Dioceſans, for which cauſe the Pope ſtirreth vp the King againſt them, who therupon directed forth a commiſſion to the Biſhops, to proceed with greater authority againſt *William Swinderby*, *Stephen Bell*, *Walter Brute*, and others of the ſame opinions: By which meanes the growth of the Goſpell was nipped, and a little kept in, but afterward it brake forth with more effectualneſſe, as may appeare by the booke of concluſions exhibited to the Parliament holden at *London*, in the 18. of *Richard* the 2.

1395. Touching the abuſes of the Church, Popiſh prieſthood, ſingle life of Prieſts, the fained miracle of Tranſubſtantiation, Exorciſmes, and Prieſtly bleſſings, Maſſes for the dead, Pilgrimages, and oblations to Reliques and Images, Confeſſion, Nunnes and Widdowes vowing ſingle life, in all which, a reformation was deſired in the ſaid Bill, the copy whereof is to bee ſeene in *Archiuis Regijs*: ſo alſo the Kings dealing with certaine of his Lords, as namely, *Richard Sturie*, *Lewis Clifford*, *Tho. Latimer*, *Io. Mountacute*, &c. whom he did ſharpely rebuke and threaten terribly, for that he heard them to be fauourers of that ſide. Adde to this the complaints of the Biſhops againſt the Londoners, occaſioned by another brawle, but certainely the maine matter was, becauſe the Londoners were fauourers of *Wickliffes* doctrine, as in the ſtory of S. *Albons* is to be ſeene, vpon which occaſion the King remoued the Courts and Termes to be kept at *Yorke*, to the great decay of the City, which happened *An.* 1393. All theſe things laid

together, doe plainely and demonſtratiuely tell vs, that there was more then one or two knowne to be infected, elſe what need ſuch adoo with Letters, Epiſtles, Bulls, Mandates, Commiſſions to roote out the proceeding of a few. No doubt therefore but there were many worthy witneſſes and confeſſors of the truth of the Goſpell.

1400. After the depoſing of *Richard* 2. when *Henrie* 4. had gotten the Crowne, the next yeere hee called a Parliament, in which one *W. Sawtree*, a good man, and faithfull Prieſt, inflamed with the zeale of true Religion, required he might be heard for the commodity of the whole Realme. But the matter being ſmelt out by the Biſhops, they obtained that it might be referred to the Conuocation, before whom being conuented & examined of diuers Articles of Religion, agreeable to *Wickliffes* doctrine, for that hee ſtood conſtantly in the defence of the truth, was by them condemned, degraded, and laſtly burned. And this was the firſt Martyr that ſuffered for Religion, ſince the renuing of it by *Wickliffe*: for howſoeuer the Biſhops had obtained the Statute *de comburendo*, in the daies of *Rich.* 2. yet in all his time none ſuffered death for that cauſe. But when *Henry* 4. came to the Crowne, hee willing to keepe in with the Clergy, which in thoſe daies was a ſtrong faction, put the Statute in execution, firſt vpon this *Sawtree*, and after him followed many moe, ſome whereof are recorded, but certainely the names of many are loſt and forgotten. See the words of the Statute made in the ſecond yeere of *Henry* the fourth, mentioning a good company of ſuch Preachers, whom that age called hereticall.

1407. The ſtorie of *William Thorpe* is famous, written by his owne hand, contayning his accuſation and examination

mination before Archbiſhop *Arundell*; his anſwere; his commendation of *Wickliffe*, and defence of his doctrine, he taught againſt the Sacrament of the Altar, Maſſe, Images, Pilgrimages, pride of Prieſt, confeſſion, &c. A conſtant Profeſſour hee was of the Truth, and queſtionleſſe continued to the end, howſoeuer his end is vnknowne: in all likely-hoode he dyed in priſon. The like end befell to *Iohn Aſhton*, another of *Wickliffes* followers, who for the ſame Doctrine of the Sacrament, was condemned by the Biſhops, and becauſe he would not recant, was committed to perpetuall priſon, wherein the good man continued vntill his death. Somewhat before *Thorps* trouble, happened the trouble of *Iohn Purvey*, who, as *Waldenſis* writeth, was the Library of the Lollards, and a gloſſe vpon *Wickliffe*. This *Purvey*, together with *Hanford*, a Doct. of Diuinity, were grieuouſly tormented and puniſhed in the Caſtle of Saltwood, at length recanted at *Pauls* Croſſe; afterward, againe hee was impriſoned vnder Archbiſhop *Chichely*, in the yeere 1421. his Articles which he taught, were touching tranſubſtantiation, confeſſion, Power of the keyes, vowes of chaſtity, the charge of Prieſts; he ſaid that *Innocent* the third, and the 600. Biſhops, and all the reſt of the Clergy which in the Councell of Lateran determined the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation and confeſſion, were fooles and blockheads, ſeducers of the people, Heretickes, and blaſphemers: he wrote diuers bookes, as touching the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, of penance, orders, the power of the Keyes, the preaching of the Goſpell, of marriages, vowes, poſſeſſions, correction of the Clergy, of the lawes and decrees of the Church, of the ſtate and condition of the Pope and Clergy.

1409. *Iohn Badby* firſt, moleſted and condemned by the Biſhop of Worceſter, was afterwards accuſed before Archbiſhop *Arundel*, and other his Aſſiſtants, for being vnſound in the doctrine of the Sacrament, as denying the reall preſence, and tranſubſtantiation: and being demanded whether he would renounce and forſake his opinions, and adhere to the Doctrine of the Catholike Church, hee confeſſed, That he had both ſaid and maintained the ſame, and would adhere and ſtand to theſe his opinions, and while hee liued, would neuer retract the ſame; for which hee was condemned, and in Smithfield burned.

After this, the Prelates not contenting themſelues with this, that now they had the power of the ſecular arme to aſſiſt them in the puniſhment of Heretikes, and hauing a King to their mind, ready to ſerue their turne in al points, at the Parliamẽt thẽ held, procured the Statute *ex Officio*, the ſequell whereof coſt many a man his life: at the ſame time alſo came foorth diuers conſtitutions of Archbiſhop *Arundell*, forbidding to preach or teach any thing contrary to the Determination of the Church in the points of the Sacrament of the Altar, Matrimony, Confeſſion, or other Sacraments, or other Articles of faith. Item, that no Schoolemaſters ſhould, in teaching the Sciences, intermingle any thing concerning the Sacraments, contrary to the determination of the Church. That none of *Wickliffes* bookes ſhould bee read, thoſe onely excepted which the Vniuerſitie of Oxford had allowed. Item, That none ſhould tranſlate any Text of Scripture into Engliſh. Item, That diligent inquiſition ſhould bee made by euery Prouoſt, Principall, and Maſter of euery Colledge in Oxford, among the Schollers, for perſons defamed of hereſie.

Now let all men iudge, whether theſe conſtitutions giuen at Oxford in this manner, do not plainely declare, that there was a great company of theſe men who profeſſed and taught ſuch points, which theſe conſtitutions did condemne. Againe, is it any wonder, that after ſuch ſtrength and force, ſuch policy and practices vſed to ſupplant the doctrine of *Wickliffe*, and his followers, it ſhould bee almoſt extinguiſhed? The Biſhops and Clergy hauing the King on their ſide, armed with Lawes, Statutes, Puniſhments, Impriſonments, Fire, Faggot, Sword, and the like, what wonder is it, if they beare all before them? Is it equall to challenge vs to ſhew foorth our Church, to require a viſibility of it, when theſe who are our aduerſaries, hauing the ſword in their hand, did labour ſo abundantly to ſuppreſſe the memoriall of them? And yet by the goodneſſe of God it came to paſſe, as may appeare by the Regiſters, that thoſe perſons whom they condemned and deteſted as Heretikes, calling them Lollards, did increaſe daily in diuers countries, eſpecially at London, in Lincolne-ſhire, Norfolke, Hereford, Shrewsbury, and in Calice, and other quarters, in the Prouince of Canterbury, with whom Archbiſhop Arundel had much adoe, as by his Regiſters doth appeare.

1413. *Henry* the fourth beeing dead, ſucceeded *Henry* the fifth, crowned on Paſſion Sunday, preſently after began a Parliament to be called and holden after Eaſter, at Weſtminſter, at which time alſo was holden a Synod at London vnder Archbiſhop *Arundel*: The chiefe cauſe of aſſembling thereof, was, to repreſſe the growing of the Goſpell, and eſpecially to withſtand the noble and worthy Lord Cobham, who was then noted to be a principall fauourer, receiuer, and maintainer

tainer of them, whom the Clergy called Lollards, eſpecially in the dioceſſe of London, Hereford, and Rocheſter, ſetting them vp to preach, whom the Biſhops had not licenſed: hee was alſo accuſed to bee farre otherwiſe in the beliefe of the Sacraments of the Altar, of Penance, of Pilgrimage, Image-worſhip, and of eccleſiaſticall power, then the holy Church of Rome had taught for many yeeres before; his examination, confeſſion, and declaration of his Chriſtian beliefe, his godly anſwers, and reaſons, his conſtancy in the truth is worth the reading. Finally, he was alſo condemned, and committed to the Tower, out of which hee made an eſcape, peraduenture not without the helpe of Sir *Roger Acton*, who himſelfe, whatſoeuer hee was otherwiſe, certaine it is that hee was alwaies of a contrary minde and opinion to the Romiſh Biſhops and Clergy, for which he was greatly hated of thē: his friendly helpe to the Lord *Cobham*, is thought to haue bin the cauſe why hee was apprehended, and brought into trouble; and in the end came to his death, ſome three yeres before the Lord *Cobham*; and with him *I. Browne*, and *I. Bouerly* a preacher, ſuffered the ſame kind of death in S. Giles fields, with other moe, to the number of 36. as the ſtories doe report: all which are ſaid to haue bin hanged and burned in the moneth of Ianuary 1413. The which death alſo the Lord *Cobham* ſuffred ſome foure yeeres after his eſcape, being betrayed and brought in by the Lord *Powes*, either for the hatred of the religion, and true Doctrine of Ieſus Chriſt, or elſe for greedineſſe of the reward promiſed by the King to them that could bring in the Lord *Cobham* aliue or dead: for being thus taken, he was adiudged to be hanged vpon the new gallows in S. Giles field, and burned hanging: for you muſt know,

know that the Prelates (the better to ſuppreſſe this doctrine) had gotten an Act paſſed, which condemned the Lollards and followers of *Wickliffe*, decreeing, that they ſhould be accounted as traitors to the King and Realme, and ſo ſhould ſuffer double puniſhment, *viz.* to be burnt as heretikes, and hanged as traitors to the King; teſtified by *Polydore Virgil*, and by *Waldenſis*.

1415. After *Th. Arundel*, ſucceeded Archbiſhop *Chicheley*, before whom was conuented *Iohn Claydon*, who for the ſpace of 20. yeeres before had beene ſuſpected of Lollardy; He was accuſed to haue diuers bookes in Engliſh, out of which his Aduerſaries collected 15. Articles, which they condemned as hereticall and erronious; for which cauſe he was condemned, and ſhortly after, together with *Rich. Turning*, burned in Smithfield. Shortly after, the Archbiſhop, with the reſt of the Clergy, made other conſtitutions againſt the Lollards: After the ſetting forth of which conſtitutions, great inquiſition followed in England, and many good men, whoſe hearts began to fauour the Goſpell, were brought to much vexation and trouble, and cauſed outwardly to abiure. Thus while Chriſt had the inward hearts of men, Antichriſt would needs poſſeſſe the outward body, and make them ſing his ſong: In the number of whom were *I. Taylor*, *W. Iames*, *I. Dwerſe*, *Iohn Iourdly*, M. *Roberts*, Parſon of *Hegly*, *W. Henry*, *I. Gall*, *Bart. Cornmonger*, *N. Hooper*, *Th. Granter*; ſo alſo *Ralph Mongin* Prieſt, was condemned to perpetuall priſon. After this followed the Recantation of *Ric. Monke*, and of *Edmund Frith*, beſides many more recorded in the ſame Regiſter, who likewiſe for their faith and Religion were much vexed and troubled. The names of 16. are ſet downe in the proceſſe of the Archbiſhop, directed forth againſt the ſame perſons, whereof ſome whole houſholds, both men and women, were driuen to forſake their houſes & townes

for danger of perſecution: yea, ſo cruelly was the Romiſh Clergy bent againſt them, and ſo grieued to ſee the poore flocke of Chriſt to multiply, that *Henry Obichely* ſtirred vp the Pope againſt them; alledging that there were ſo many infected with the doctrine of *Wickliffe* and *Huſſe* here in England, that without force of an army they could not be ſuppreſſed.

1422. *Henry* 5. being dead, his Sonne *Henry* 6. a child of nine moneths old ſucceeded; In the firſt yeere of whoſe raigne was *W. Taylor* accuſed, conuicted, condemned, & afterward in Smithfield with Chriſtian conſtancy, after long impriſonment did conſummate his martyrdome. Others there were that profeſſed the ſame truth, but for feare durſt not be ſo bold; ſo that it appeareth by the Regiſters of *Norwich* in that Dioceſſe within the ſpace of 3. yeeres, *viz.* from 1428. to 1431. about the number of 120. men and women were examined, and much vexed for the profeſſion of the Chriſtian faith; of whom three ſuffered death, *viz.* Father *Abraham* of Colcheſter, *W. White*, and *I. Waddon*, Prieſts; the reſt ſuſtained ſuch cruell penance as pleaſed the Biſhop & his Chancellor to lay vpon them, which howſoeuer, through the hard dealing of the times, they were conſtrained to recant, and many of them to abiure their opinions, yet their good will to the truth is manifeſt: and it is fit to preſerue the memory of their names, if it be but to ſtop the mouth of ſuch malignant aduerſaries, who following blind affection rather then true knowledge of times and antiquities, through ignorance blame they know not what, accuſing the true doctrine of the Goſpell to be nouelty, and the Preachers thereof to bee Nouelists, whereas this doctrine lacking none antiquity, hath from time to time burſt forth, and preuailed in many places, though in the moſt through tyranny it hath beene ſuppreſſed, as by theſe good men of *Norfolk* & *Suffolk* may

appeare, who if they had had the liberty which we haue, and authority to back them, it would haue well appeared how old this doctrine is, ſo that all men would haue acknowledged, that this our Church was long before *Luther*.

1430. Shortly after the ſolemne Coronation of *Hen.6.* which was in the 8. yeere of his raigne, was *Richard Honedon*, a Londoner, crowned with martyrdome. The next yeere *Th. Bagly* a Prieſt, and *Paul Craw* a Bohemian, both valiant defenders of *Wickliffes* doctrine, were condemned and burned. Not long after, about the yeere 1439. which was the 18. of *Henry 6.* was *Ri. Wiche* burned for hereſie, as then they counted it. So much the more famous was his martyrdome, becauſe the fame was, that before his death he ſpake as propheſying, that the Poſterne of the Tower ſhould ſinke, which came to paſſe; vpon which hee was counted an holy man. Many came to the place where he was burnt, and there made their oblations, till by the commandement of the King they were forbid, and ſome puniſhed.

After *Chichely*, in the See of *Canterbury* ſucceeded *Stafford*, *Kempe*, and then *Burſcher*, in whoſe time fell out the trouble of *Reynold Peacock*, Biſhop of *Chicheſter*, who after the death of *Humfrey* Duke of *Glouceſter*, his Patron, was moleſted by the Archbiſhop in the yeere 1457. becauſe he taught againſt the reall preſence, the infallibility of the Councels, the locall diſſention into hell: That the Church may erre in matter of faith: That the literall ſence of the Scripture is onely to be held: He was at length inforced to giue way; for, what with bluſtering threats to terrifie him, as alſo with faire promiſes to allure him, they left no ſtone vnrolled, till they brought him to recantation at *Pauls* croſſe, where alſo his bookes were burnt, yet for all this, himſelfe (belike he was ſuſpected) was kept in his own houſe during his naturall life.

1473. King *Henry* 6. being depoſed, *Edward* 4. got the Crowne; In the time of whoſe raigne, a godly and conſtant ſeruant of Chriſt, named *Iohn Gooſe*, alias *Huſſe*, was vniuſtly condemned and burnt at the Tower hill.

1485. *Henry* 7. comming to the Crowne, mention is made in the Regiſters of *Couentry* and *Lichfield*, of 9. perſons perſecuted in that Dioceſſe, whoſe names are ſet downe to be *I. Blomſton, Rich. Hegham, Robert Crowther, I. Smith, Rob. Browne, Th. Butler, I. Falkes. R. Hilman.* The hereſies, of which they were accuſed, were, for oppoſing Pilgrimages, Images, Merits, Purgatory, Shrift, Tranſubſtantiation, and the like.

After theſe, in the ninth yeere of *Henry* 7. was burned an old woman of 80. yeeres, *Ioane Boughton* by name, who held eight of *Wickliffes* opinions ſo ſtiffely, that all the Doctours in *London* could not turne her: ſhe was burned in Smithfield ſhortly after in *Anno* 1497. Some for feare recanted at *Pauls* Croſſe, and in the next yeere, an old man and a Prieſt, and one *Babram* were burned. 1506. *William Tilſworth* was burned for his Religion in *Amerſham*, at which time, *Ioane Clarke* the ſaid *Tilſworths* daughter, was conſtrained to put fire to her Father, at whoſe burning, about 60. other were enioyned to beare fagots, of whom diuers were commanded to beare and weare fagots at *Lincolne* the ſpace of 7. yeeres after, ſome at one time, ſome at another. A little after was Father *Roberts* a Miller of *Miſſenden* burned at *Buckingham*, and 20. other bare fagots, and did penance. About 2. or 3. yeres after, at *Amerſham* was burned *Th. Barnard*, & *Ia. Mordon* in one fire, and Father *Rogers*, and Father *Reeue* was burned in the cheeke. So alſo was *W. Littlepage*, and 30. more were burned in the right cheeke, and bare fagots at the ſame time. The manner of their burning in the cheeke was this: Their neckes being tyed faſt to a poſte with towels, and their hands

holden

holden that they might not ſtirre, they were marked with a hot iron; The cauſe of thoſe mens trouble was, becauſe they talked againſt ſuperſtition, and idolatry, and were deſirous to heare and reade the holy Scriptures.

Thomas Chaſe condemned by the Biſhop of Lincolne, *William Smith*, and caſt into priſon, was there murthered, and after ſlandered to haue made away himſelfe. *Thomas Norrice* for the profeſſion of Chriſts Goſpel was burned at Norwich 1507. *Elizabeth Samſon* accuſed to ſpeake againſt Pilgrimages, adoration of Images, and againſt the Sacrament of the Altar, was compelled to abiure before *William Horſey*, Chancellor at London 1508. *Laurence Gheſt*, two yeeres in priſon at Salisbury, was afterward put to death for his religion: ſo alſo was there martyred another poore woman, whoſe death ſo greedily ſought by the Chancellor *Whittington*, was preſently reuenged by the enraged Bul, which running through the preaſe of people, came to the Chancellor, and gored him thorow with his hornes, carrying his guts along the ſtreets, to the great admiration and wonder of all them that ſaw it.

1509 *H.* 7. hauing finiſhed his courſe, after him followed *H.* 8. in whoſe dayes hapned much ſtir and contention about religion, as in the Hiſtory of the Church doth appeare: In the Regiſt. of *Fitz-Iames*, B. of London, are cõtained the names of diuers, to the number of 40. perſecuted in the Dioceſſe of London, betweene the yeere 1509. and 1527. of whom, ſome, after they had ſhewed their weaknes in recanting, did afterwards returne to their former profeſſion, and cleauing faſt to it, were for it martyred, as *W. Sweeting*, & *I. Bruſter* burned in Smithfield 1511. & *I. Browne* burned in Aſhford, about the 4. yere of *H.* 8. about which time alſo fell out the trouble of *Rich. Hunne*, whom after his death they condemned of Hereſie.

But now the numbers of Confeſſors and Martyrs ariſe

to such multitudes, that a long discourse, and a large treatise would hardly suffice to set them downe; wherefore I passe ouer the story of *I. Sulman, The Man, Rob. Cosin, Chri. Shomaker*, Martyrs; As also diuers Confessors, to the number of 35. abiured about the yeere 1520. for speaking against worshipping of Saints, Pilgrimage, Inuocation of the Virgin, the Sacrament of the Lords body, and for hauing bookes in English, as the 4. Euangelists, the Epistles of *Paul, Peter*, and *Iames*, the Book of the Reuelation, a Booke of Antichrist, of the 10. Commandements, and *Wickliffes* Wicket, Bookes no doubt wonderfully stuft with heresies, & doctrine vnmeet for Christians to know, and vnderstand. Oh the subtilty of those Romish Foxes! How many men and women were persecuted in the Diocesse of Lincolne, vnder Bishop *Longland*, anno 1521. for opposing, or not consenting to the Romish doctrine of pilgrimage, Image-worship, Transubstantiation, reall presence. Their arguments they collected out of the Scripture, the Shepheards Calender, *Wickliffes* Wicket, and such other bookes as they had amongst them, and notwithstanding they had not with them any learned man to ground them in the doctrine, yet they conferring together, did conuert one another, the Lords hand working among them marueilously. After the great abiuration which was vnder Bishop *Smith*, they were termed amongst themselues *Knowne men, or iust fast men*; not much vnlike to the present name of Protestants: Amongst whom, to see their trauels, their earnest seeking, burning zeale, their readings, watchings, sweete assemblies, loue, and concord, godly liuing, faithfull meaning, may make vs, now in these our dayes of free profession, to be ashamed.

From all which duely considered, we may easily gather, what would haue bin the number of Professors, had the

world looked friendly vpon them; For if when the Temporall Magistrate tooke hand with the Ecclesiasticall to suppresse them, and roote them out; if when all men of note and learning, either for hope of preferment, or feare of trouble, turned their studies otherwaies; if when the Scripture, and Englisn bookes were forbidden; if when bookes were so rare, and deare, and so hard to come by (as before the Science of printing was inuented they were) if notwithstanding all these hinderances, the Truth of God did so multiply amongst them, what would it haue done, had they had multitude of bookes, or those cheape, the Scripture in English, had they had learned men to guide them, had they liued in a peaceable time, had they had the Magistrate either for them, or at least not against them: for why was the increase of the Gospell in Bohemia by the preaching of *I. Husse*, more remarkable and further spred, then here in England, but that the Magistrate with his sword was not so seuere against them? Whence was it that *Luther* preuailed more then *Wickliffe*, but that hee had a supporter (the Duke of Saxony) which *Wickliffe* wanted? Amongst vs at this day, doe we not all know, that Arminianisme would haue more preuailed, and infected further then yet it doth, if the Kings Maiesty were either for it, or not against it?

Wherefore all men may easily see, that they are much deceiued, who cõdemne this our doctrine of nouelty, and insultingly demand, *Where was your Church before Luther?*

To whom wee answere out of this demonstration hitherto made, That euer since the dayes of *Wickliffe*, almost 200. yeeres before *Luther*, the doctrine of the reformed Churches, that is, those points wherein they differ from the church of Rome, and in which the reformation doth consist, these points (I say) were held and professed: for whence came those persecutions? or vvho vvere they that

thus

thus were persecuted? If of the same profession with them, then is their cruelty vnreasonable, to persecute their owne fraternity: if they were otherwise, how then is the doctrine of the reformed Churches so new, or the Professours thereof so lately start vp, as our aduersaries pretend they be? But this is the fruit of ignorance and carelesnesse to read the Histories of the Church, and the records of antiquity heretofore: For then might men easily see, that the Church of England hath not wanted multitudes of well-disposed hearts; howsoeuer the publike authority then lacked, to maintaine the open preaching of the Gospell.

Now whilst our aduersaries bethinke themselues what to say to this part of the Induction, concerning the estate of the Church in our owne country of England, in the ages next before *Luther*, I wil passe ouer into Germany, and see what successe the Gospell had there, especially in Bohemia, by the preaching of *Iohn Hasse* and others, who liued in the same age with *Wickliffe*: Afterwards will I proceede to prosecute the argument of the Induction, by the demonstration of History in the ages before *Wickliffe*, and *Hasse*, if it shall be thought conuenient.

FINIS.

TRUE HAPPINES, OR, KING DAVIDS CHOICE.

Begunne in Sermons, and now digested into a TREATISE.

By Mr. WILLIAM STRUTHER, *Preacher at Edinburgh.*

LUKE 10.

One thing is necessarie, *Marie* hath chosen the best part, that shall not be taken from her.

Aug. Mor. 4.

Illud est hominis optimum, quod & corpore & animâ optimum facit.

Idem Lib. Arb. 2. 19.

Vita beata est animi affectio inhærentis summo bono.

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